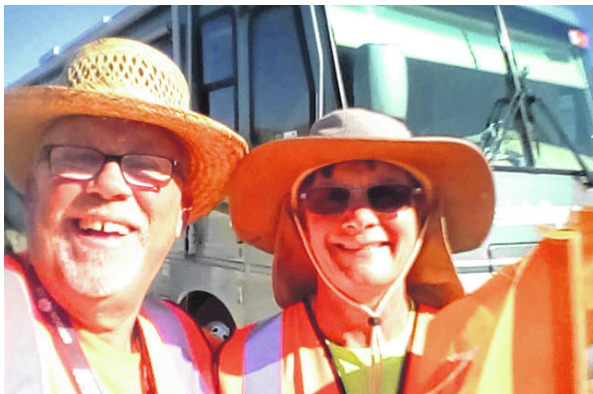


Baldwins chose the RV life

NEWS, TOP STORIES

Baldwins chose the RV life

By Alberta Stojkovic - The Sentinel



Herb and Kathy Baldwin in front of their Airstream by their winter home in Casa Grande, Arizona.

Sentinel Photo

MOUNT GILEAD — Home for Kathy and Herb Baldwin has been on the road in their RV for the past three and a half years. Herb retired in August 2016 and they went on the road in September.

Baldwins have seen the United States from coast to coast in their 2002 Land Yacht diesel Airstream. They have also “earned” their stay at RV camps by work camping, hosting and volunteering at RV camps on their journeys.

The COVID-19 crisis brought them back home to Mount Gilead earlier than anticipated last week. They were scheduled to work at a North Carolina camp, but they were concerned about increasing crowded conditions in RV camps the past few weeks.

“With coronavirus, we weren’t comfortable working with so many people who were coming and going,” Herb said.

A lot of the state and county parks are closed along with national parks, so now full-time RVers are looking for places. Herb was especially concerned about Kathy, who would be checking people in at the location.

The Baldwins got nostalgic as they talked about their experiences on the road the past few years.

Arizona home

“We fell in love with Arizona,” said Herb. “Our first work camping experience was in a small park in Camp Verde, north of Phoenix.”

Kathy talked about the range of climate in Arizona from the snow and pine forests of Flagstaff to the deserts and heat of Tucson.

“What we missed most was family and friends.” Kathy said. They came home every six months for two weeks the first two years. Summers were spent in Michigan where they also have family.

They joined a work camping group called the Escapees RV Club and say it is like another family. They keep in contact with many people they meet along the way through that club.

“It’s a lot like a church family,” said Kathy.

Helping campers

Herb, a retired Morrow County realtor, described their year that includes 6-10 months of work camping and traveling. Winter months November through March are spent at the RV property they purchased in Casa Grande, Arizona.

Baldwins told how their work in camps varies from place to place. In many parks Kathy often helps with office work. It's a natural for her since she was a secretary at Edison School and for the Mount Gilead School District.

Herb's work included helping campers park their RVs when they arrived, cleaning fire pits and other maintenance work.

This spring and summer Baldwins are enjoying the apartment above the garage on the property where they lived before they left town. They sold it to their daughter Sara and son-in-law Stu who now live in the home with their family.

They gave much of their furniture and equipment to their daughter and son David. Kathy said she kept only a cedar chest with some family items and keepsakes.

"We don't miss that stuff a bit," said Kathy. "It's about the people and the places, not the stuff."